STATUS OF CLAIMS

1. **(Previously Presented)** An aqueous sol containing silica-based particles, which sol has:
(i) an S-value within the range of from 10 to 45%;
(ii) a viscosity within the range of from 5 to 40 cP; and
(iii) a molar ratio of SiO_2 to M_2O, where M is alkali metal or ammonium, within the range of from 10:1 to 40:1; and
(iv) the silica-based particles have a specific surface area within the range of from 550 to 725 m^2/g.

2-21. **Canceled.**

22. **(Previously Presented)** The aqueous sol according to claim 1, wherein the S-value is within the range of from 20 to 40%.

23. **(Previously Presented)** The aqueous sol according to claim 1, wherein the sol has a molar ratio of SiO_2 to M_2O, where M is alkali metal or ammonium, within the range of from 15:1 to 30:1.

24. **(Previously Presented)** The aqueous sol according to claim 1, wherein the sol has pH of at least 10.6.

25. **(Previously Presented)** The aqueous sol according to claim 1, wherein the sol has a viscosity within the range of from 7 to 25 cP.

26. **(Previously Presented)** The aqueous sol according to claim 1, wherein the sol has a molar ratio of Al_2O_3 to SiO_2 within the range of from 1:4 to 1:1500.

27. **(Previously Presented)** The aqueous sol according to claim 1, wherein the sol has a molar ratio of B, where B is boron, to SiO_2 within the range of from 1:4 to 1:1500.

28. **(Previously Presented)** The aqueous sol according to claim 1, wherein the sol has a molar ratio of Al to B, where B is boron, within the range of from 100:1 to 1:100.

29. **(Previously Presented)** An aqueous sol containing silica-based particles, which sol has:
(i) an S-value within the range of from 10 to 45%;
(ii) a viscosity within the range of from 5 to 40 cP; and
(iii) a silica content of at least 10% by weight; and
(iv) the silica-based particles have a specific surface area within the range of from 550 to 725 m^2/g.

30. **(Previously Presented)** The aqueous sol according to claim 29, wherein the S-value is within the range of from 20 to 40%.

31. **(Previously Presented)** The aqueous sol according to claim 29, wherein the sol has a pH of at least 10.6.

32. **(Previously Presented)** The aqueous sol according to claim 29, wherein the sol has a silica content within the range of from 12 to 20% by weight.

33. **(Previously Presented)** The aqueous sol according to claim 29, wherein the sol has a viscosity within the range of from 7 to 25 cP.

34. **(Previously Presented)** The aqueous sol according to claim 29, wherein the sol has a molar ratio of SiO_2 to M_2O, where M is alkali metal or ammonium, within the range of from 10:1 to 40:1.

35. **(Previously Presented)** An aqueous sol containing silica-based particles, which sol has:
(i) an S-value within the range of from 10 to 45%;
(ii) a viscosity within the range of from 7 to 25 cP;
(iii) a silica content of at least 10% by weight;
(iv) a molar ratio of SiO_2 to M_2O, where M is alkali metal or ammonium, within the range of from 10:1 to 40:1; and
(v) a pH of at least 10.6.

36. **(Previously Presented)** The aqueous sol according to claim 35, wherein the silica-based particles have a specific surface area of at least $300m^2/g$ up to 1050 m^2/g.

37. **(Previously Presented)** The aqueous sol according to claim 35, wherein the silica-based particles have a specific surface area within the range of from 775 to 1050 m^2/g.

38. **(Previously Presented)** The aqueous sol according to claim 35, wherein the silica-based particles have a specific surface area within the range of from 550 to 725 m^2/g.

39. **(Previously Presented)** An aqueous sol containing silica-based particles, which sol has:
(i) an S-value within the range of from 10 to 45%;
(ii) a viscosity within the range of from 5 to 40 cP;
(iii) a silica content of at least 10% by weight;
(iv) a molar ratio of SiO_2 to M_2O, where M being alkali metal or ammonium, within the range of from 10:1 to 40:1; and
(v) the sol is modified by an aluminium-containing compound, a boron-containing compound or a mixture thereof.

40. **(Previously Presented)** The aqueous sol according to claim 39, wherein the silica-based particles have a specific surface area of at least $300m^2/g$ up to 1050 m^2/g.